

Weighty Questions DISCUSSED:

6.

- I. *Whether Imposition of Hands in Separating a Person to the Work of the Ministry be Necessary?*
- II. *Whether it be Essential to the right Constitution of a particular Church, that the Teaching Elders and the Members meet always in One Place?*

Whereunto is added

A Prediction of Mr. Daniel Rogers, Minister in *Essex*, long before the Beheading King *Charles I.* and Arch-Bishop *Laud*, foretelling that they should not dye a Natural Death.

*Devon 2420
entred*

By *GILES FIRMIN*,
Author of the *Real Christian*.

What thing soever I Command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it, Deut. 13. 32.

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To the R E A D E R.

THAT Unity among Christian Brethren is a thing not only beautifull in it self, but also a Duty greatly incumbent upon them who profess that blessed Name of Christ, none that read the Holy Scripture can be ignorant of it ; yea, a Duty so greatly incumbent, that they who do not all they can to promote it [provided the Authority of the Scriptures be preserved] taking care that they neither profess nor practise any thing in the House of God, but what is according to the Holy Scriptures, lest that Unity should be hindered, they neither shew that respect to the Command of Christ to us, nor to the Prayer he made to his Father for this End, as become Christians.

I thought I might have said, that both in former times, and in these dayes, I had been as desirous of this Unity as some other Men. Glad I was when I heard some Brethren of the Independant and Presbyterial Perswasion in London did attempt it ; their Names were very dear unto me, when I heard who they were that laboured in it, tho' I knew none of them ; more glad I was, when about four Tears since a Copy of the Agreement was sent me, to which my Brethren in the Countrey and my self readily consented : We expected the same should have been Published, but we find another much different from it. In particular, in the former, Ordination was to be performed with Imposition of Hands, but in this the Words are left out, and these words put in, The Person that is Chosen, shall be Duely Ordained ; not expressing what that Due Ordination is : However, as it is worded, I Consent to this ; and whatever be the different Sentiments I have from others, in several things mentioned [and more than are mentioned] in the Agreement, yet I have willingly Subscribed to it, and Profess my self a United Brother with all that are Duely Ordained.

In a small Treatise which some few Years since I published, I took Notice of the Apostolical Churches how they were Constituted, I named Nine Churches, all that I could find, in which were several Elders : I find not one Church in the Gospel where was but One Pastor.

Since that, Dr. Owen hath taken Notice of it, and hath proved by several Scriptures and Reasons, that there ought to be many Elders in every particular Church. [There were three Teaching Elders, besides other Officers, in his Church, this was like a Gospel Church.] To have but one Pastor to govern, is a Novel Opinion, he saith ; and what he adds is true, It is difficult, if not impossible, on supposition of one Elder only in a Church, to preserve the Rule of the Church from being Prelatical or Popular.

As there ought to be many Elders in one Church, so I doubt not but the true Primitive Church-Government was by a President with the Presbytery. Not

At that Holy Table, where we being many are one bread,
1 Cor. 10. 17. I do admit Independents, Presbyterians & Anabaptists, Members of the Church of England, that are, and walk as Christians, tho' we differ in Opinion, and here Ecclesiastical Union is chiefly seen.

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President over more Churches, but only one particular Church. Not a President superior in Power over the Presbytery, but only Ordinis gratiâ, Revel. 2. 18. τῷ ἀγγέλῳ. (a) 24. σὺν τῷ ἀγγέλῳ, (b) the light of Nature directs to this. I would willingly have but one Instance given, where this Government was ever prejudicial to the Church. More I could say: I only mention this, that tho' in these Points I may differ from my Brethren, besides what are mentioned in the Agreement, yet it binders not my Union with them.

What this Due Ordination is, our Brethren, as I said, have not told us. Hence the Discussing of this Question, falls not under that Prohibition, p. 3. that we must not Dispute those different Sentiments: For our Sentiments do all agree it must be Due Ordination; which if it be not declared what it is, we agree and Subscribe to we know not what.

Before I Subscribed, I asked the Brethren whether the Subscribing to this Agreement did debar us from an amicable discussing the Questions wherin we differ? they all Answered, No. We were not hindered by it. We know the different Sentiments, before we Subscribe the Agreement, and tho' we Dispute them, yet our Union holds as well as if we did not dispute them.

The Apostle exhorts, 1 Cor. 1. 10 and Phil. 2. 2. that we be all of one Mind, of one Judgment. If we must not labour after it, to what purpose is the Exhortation? Is not the discussing Controvred Questions in a Christian amicable way, seeking Light from God, and setting up his Ends, [not our own] one way to come to be of one mind, which the Apostle exhorts to? I am sure it is, and could give good proof of it from experience, in the Question now disputed. If we may not do this, then it is as much as to say, There are different Sentiments amongst us, and shall be so; for still, I say, the End of the Agreement, which is Union, is preserved.

As to the Question of Ruling Elders, which have continued in the Virgin Churches of the Vaudois from the Apostles dayes, and in the Churches of Bohemia, where their Work is laid open with much more satisfaction to me, than in any Book I have yet seen in England. I shall be thankfull to any Brother who will dispute the Question Pro or Con, it shall not hinder Union.

As to this Question about Ordination, it is to my Knowledge a great hindrance of our Union: The thing is so clear in several Texts of Scripture, how it should be performed, and the Practice of the best, if not all the Churches since the Apostles times, have been accordingly with Imposition of Hands, that I have wondered any Man should scruple it.

I heard of an Ordination in our County of an illiterate Person, and that without Imposition of Hands; after it was past, hearing of another [who

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is a Scholar] to be Ordained by the same Persons, I wrote to him, to desire the Elders that were to Ordain him, to give me the Scriptures which did Warrant them to Ordain without Imposition of Hands : One of them undertook it, a Person whose Gifts and Graces I honour. For Scriptures he gave me none : Whether his Reasons be Cogent, the sequel shall declare.

That Diminishing from the Word is as great a Sin as Addition to the Word, none can deny ; the Text is expressly against them both, Deut. 12. 32. and ch. 4. 2. both offer an Affront to the Wisdom of the Law-giver : Addition charges him with Defect : Diminishing charges him with superfluity, appointing things needless and vain.

Grant it, that Imposition of Hands in Ordination be but a Ceremony, yet it is God's Ceremony, appointed first by his express Command, Numb. 8. 10, 14. Not to conferr Gifts, as some would have it, but to Separate to Office. If you then could deny Communion with the Church of England, because of their Addition of Humane Doctrinal Ceremonies to the Worship of God [I doubt not but this was one Cause among others,] may we not then question our Communion with you, in your Administiring of the Holy things, for throwing out God's Ceremony.

It is one thing to hold Communion with a Person as a Christian [which I can do with all my Soul] another thing to hold Communion with the same Person as a Minister, dispensing the Holy things of God : For when, as in Separation to Office, God's Ceremony expressed in five or six Scriptures, is left out, have you not given us just Cause, setting by the Authority of God in those Scriptures, to question the lawfulness of your Ministry ? O why do our Brethren lay such Blocks in our way, to hinder that which the Lord hath so Commanded, and we so earnestly desire and seek after, Unity ?

I have spoken with some Ordained thus, and they told me they would have been Ordained with Imposition of Hands, and expected it, but they who did it, refused it ; the more trouble have they made in the Church.

They who come into the Gospel-Ministry, must come in according to Gospel-Order. God stands upon his Order, 1 Chron. 15. 13. God made a Breach upon us, for that we sought him not after Due Order. How severe was the Holy Law-giver then ; but there was not Due Order, nor is here Due Ordination : God is the same God still, the God of Order as well as then. The Scriptures are plain in this Point ; why are not we as plain ? what need have we of other words than what we find in the Scriptures ?

If Imposition of Hands were but an indifferent thing, or but a circumstance of the Action : I could Answer my self : But it will appear to be that in which Separation to Office is principally made, and in which only it is seen.

That godly and learned Men may err as well by Diminishing from the Word, as such have done in Adding to the Word, I know nothing against it, they are but Men : But these Men who [as I judge] diminish from the Word, would not therefore Unite, and hold Communion with them in Worship, where these Additions.

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ditions were, because they were godly and learned Men. We have our Rule to look to, not Men, further than they walk according to that Rule.

If the Reader meet with the Word Independent, I desire him not to be offended, for this Discourse between my Brother and my self, was before the Agreement of the United Brethren came forth; yet the word may be used sano sensu well enough: For I doubt not a particular Church duly Organized, walking regularly, may Execute all the Power of the Keys within it self, without dependency upon any other Churches.

As to the End of my publishing this Treatise, my Conscience bears me Witness before the Lord, I aim but at these two things.

1. To remove that Block, if I could, which hinders our hearty Union: I know it offends many of our Brethren; besides, it gives advantage to them who observe our Practices to speak against us, and that justly.

2. To keep up the Authority of the Scriptures, which are so plain in this Case, that if we will own Ordination without Imposition of Hands to be Due Ordination, then the Authority of five or six Scriptures is set by.

I know no other ground of our Sufferings, but our maintaining of the Authority of the Scriptures, while Men would be Imposing upon us such things in the House and Worship of God, which if the Questions were truly stated [which they never did] have no footing or ground in the Holy Scriptures, but were their Addition to them, as if the Wisdom of God in the Scriptures were defective.

If we suffered then for the Authority of the Scriptures, while Men added to them, we will not give away their Authority now while men diminish from them. Where shall we End if this be the Practice?

As to the Second Question, I seek Light.

1. To have but one Pastor or Teaching Elder in a Church, agrees neither with the Holy Scripture nor sound Reason. Good Mr. Faldo was troubled about it, I understand by his Letter to me.

2. The Poverty of the Churches generally is such, that very few can maintain One, then not more.

3. Complaints have been made by some Members of Churches, that their Pastors have not proceeded rightly against them, and they had no help.

4. If then the Holy Scriptures have not declared that the Officers and Members of a Church must meet alwayes in One Place, then all Church-work may be carried on, which as now we stand, cannot be. I begg of the Father of Lights to Guide Us.

The Unworthiest of the United Brethren,

GILES FIRMIN.

The Prediction of Mr. Daniel Rogers, Minister in Wethersfield in Essex, concerning King Charles the first, and Arch-Bishop Laud.

If you ask me who this Mr. Daniel Rogers was? he was the Son of Mr. Richard Rogers, a Man eminent in Holiness, whom God honoured to make him his Instrument in bringing home many Souls to Christ.

If you ask what he was for Grace himself? His Brother, Mr. Nathanael Ward, use to say of him, *My Brother Rogers hath Grace enough for two men, but not half enough for himself.* His Natural Constitution was no Advantage to Grace.

If you ask what he was for a Divine? his Works Answer for him.

If you ask what he was for a Scholar? two things declared him to be a Scholar; one was this: When Arch-Bishop Laud Visited, Mr. Rogers was Summoned to appear, and did so; whether Mr. Rogers did grapple with the Arch-Bishop, I cannot tell, but one that lived in the Town where I now do, being then present at the Court, heard the Arch-Bishop say to him, *Sir. Rogers, I acknowledge you to be a better Scholar than my self, but I will make you know yonr place:* And silenced him.

A second thing was this, which I had from a Kinsman of mine, who was of Clarendon at the same time, if not the same Year with Mr. Rogers; the Man was a very moderate Episcopal Man, he told me this.

The Arch-Bishop sends down a *Coryphaeus* [this was the Word he used] to the University of Cambridge, to Challenge the Puritans, and gave his Question accordingly: Great Expectation there was in the University; Mr. Rogers being Fellow of Christ's-Colledge, came up Opponent; the first Argument he used was so strong, and he followed it so cloſe, that he Cramp't the Respondent, down-fell the Ceremonial Champion; the Under-graduates obſerving it, went to Mr. Rogers, took him out of his Place, and carried him out of the Schools upon their Shoulders; when he was in the Schools yard, a Fellow of St. Johns comes behind him, and gives him a Clap on the Back as he was on their Shoulders, with these Words, *Rogers, go home and Hang thy self, thou wilt never dye with more Honour.*

This is the Man, with whom after he had Preached on his Lecture-day, I walked to his Houſe: As we were in the way, he asked me, where the King was? I told him: He looks upon me, and laid, *If that King dyas the ordinary Death of Men, then God never spoke by me.* I was amazed to hear such words come from so grave and eminent a Divine: O Sir! said I to him, What do you mean to speak such Words concerning the King; I beseech you give me your Reasons why you speak thus: He fixed his Eyes upon me, and gave me only this Answer, *Say you no more to me, but do you obſerve what I say to you.*

I was much troubled at these words. A few dayes after I met with two of his intimate Acquaintance, excellent Christians, and told them I was much troubled

troubled at what I heard Mr. Rogers speak concerning the King ; they asked me what he said ! I told them ; they Answered me, That might very well be, for before the Wars began, while the Kingdom was in Peace, he told us, *If this King Charles and this Prelate Laud dye the ordinary death of Men, then God never spake by me. [Bishop Laud's Head was off before I came into England.]* I asked them if he spake of any more ? they said, No, only those two. I thought tho' he were a very heavenly Man, and one much with God in Prayer, yet I did not take him to be immediately inspired by God, as the Prophets were, and so the Thoughts went off.

Afterwards, when the *High Court of Justice* [as they called it] sat upon the King, I did not mind his words, for I did not think they had any intention to take away the King's Life : When I understood they were in earnest, I went to Church on the Fast-day, with a purpose to stir up the People to Pray for the King's Life ; but before I came there, one overtake me upon the Road, and told me the King was dead. It was the Fast-day, on which Mr. Rogers alwayes Preached in the Forenoon : In the Afternoon [which he never did before but once, as I remember] he comes to our Church, I suppose to observe how I reflected the King's Death : After I had done, Mr. Rogers goes home with me, and discoursing about the King's Death, he recalled a Passage I had in my Prayer concerning it, *Thou saidst true*, said he to me, and there this Old Prophet [I may call him so] leaning upon my Table, bemoaned the Death of King *Charles*, being much affected with it. Let others judge of this as they please, yet this I dare say, No Prophet immediately inspir'd by God, did with more Confidence speak concerning Thing or Person as he was inspired, than Mr. Rogers did confidently foretell that King should not dye the ordinary Death of Men.

That he should have any hand in the King's Death, no rational Man that knew him would think so. 1. For he never came among Parliament or Army Men, but an old Man, lived retired at home. 2. So many Years as I lived by him, I do not remember that ever I heard him speak against the King. 3. The Words were spoken before the Wars began, to others, tho' after they were begun, to me. 4. He bemoaned the King's Death. 5. Tho' he was a very gracious Man, yet he was exercised too much with God's Hidings of himself from him, to have any Hand in such Acts.

What Use to make of this, I leave to Wise Men.

A

Weighty Question DISCUSSED.

Whether Imposition of Hands in the Separation of a Person to the Work of the Ministry be necessary?

Before I come to the Question, give me leave to premise a few things.

Firstly, The Gifts are Essential to a Minister [they must be ^{1st} *good, 1 Tim. 2. 2. to whom Timothy was committed the things be had heard, &c.*]. Yet Gifts do not make a Minister. I have known several Gentlemen [they were Scholars indeed] who as to Gifts were as fit for the Ministry as most Ministers at this day in England; yet these worthy Men did not invade the Office of the Ministry, as many illiterate, infidels, and too many erroneous Mechanicks do now, to the disgrace of that Function. Had they been grave experienced Christians, as I have known some called forth, tryed and ordained by Learned Divines to Places suitable, I should not have opposed, but encouraged and preferred before many who are called *Soldiers*, but irreligious and ignorant in Soul-Works.

Secondly, Persons may be instrumental to the Conversion of others, and yet not fit for the Ministry. I have known such. That Parents, even Mothers, by their godly Education of their Children, may be instrumental to the Conversion of their Children: Who will deny it? A notable instance I could give of a dying Mother, speaking to a wicked rebellious Son, [she had other Children godly] God blessed her Words, that he became a gracious Man.

Thirdly, The Election of the People does not make a Minister. Dr. Owen hath spoken enough to this: *Unto Officers of the Church are required, faith Lib. 2. he, Election of the People, submitting themselves unto them in the Lord, and p. 83. 85. the solemn setting them apart, by Imposition of Hands:* And after that he writes, ^{3dly.} *that Church Order is defective, that wants the Symbol of Authoritative Ordination, viz. Imposition of Hands.* ^{139.}

B

And

And in his *Exposition of the Heb. 1.3. p. 33. Imposition of Hands is a Right of Banding us in the Church, and that wherein Church Order is much concerned.*

In his Second Book of the Church, mentioned before, p. 136, he proves there ought to be many Elders in one particular Church. This he proves, 1st, from Scripture; 2dly, by Reasons: one of which he fetches from *Imposition of Hands*. I, faith he, there be but one Elder only in a Church, upon his Death or Removal, this *Imposition of Hands*, must either be left unto the People, or be supplied by the Elders of other churches, or be wholly omitted, all which are *Irregular*. He did acknowledge the Ordination he had without *Imposition of Hands*, when he turned *Independant*, was *defiditio*.

Whether Dr. *Origen* had his hand in drawing up the *Savoy Confession*, I know not. But we see, upon mature thoughts, when he is leaving the World, he gives his Judgment according to the Holy Scriptures [which should be the only Guide and Rule in the House of God] contrary to that *confession*.

Why *Imposition of Hands* by Elders of other Churches should be *Irregular*? he names no Scripture to prove it. But if it be omitted, that Ordination, saith he, is *irregular*, (this we are sure of from Scripture) that's enough for me. If it be *irregular*, then 'tis not *Due Ordination*; for the Rule hath not it's Due given to it. If such Ordination can be *valid*, to what purpose is the Rule? We shall have strange things follow if this be admitted, that in Religion, and in the House of God, *Acts* may be *valid* which are not conformable to the Word of God. The Word saith thus, but these *Acts* answer it not.

Pious and Learned Mr. *Faldo* before his Death, wrote me word, That one of the Brethren against *Imposition of Hands* was with him, and debated the Question with him; and this especially he stuck at, *He would not allow the Elders of one particular Church to perform Office-Acts, to those that were not of that Church*. Mr. *Faldo* tells me, He gave him a formal Argument, to prove that it might be, and in many cases it must be admitted. This he desired to write down, and did so, and I believe it will be seen by others in this Town of his Opinion: *And if they will take occasion to ventilate that Difference Brotherly, it will not be declined by some of your and my mind*. Thus Mr. *Faldo*.

What that Argument was Mr. *Faldo* did not write: I wrote to that Brother, desiring him to let me know it, but I cannot obtain it; he searched for it, but could not find it.

But now, for *Imposition of Hands* in separating a Person to Office in the House of God, this came in by an express Command of God, *Numb. 8. 10, 14.*

Who are meant by the *Sons of Israel* in the 10th. verse, is the Question. Mr. *Pool* saith, the *First-Born, or chief of the Tribes*. The same Persons I presume, might be both, and most probable it was so.

Fifth, *Chap. xi. [as Mr. Airswoorth Quotes him, and agrees with him in it]* saith, *They were the First-Born*. In this case he may be credited as soon as any Christian Writer.

Secondly, We read in the three next verses, 16, 17, 18. the Lord tells *Moses* three times, that he *had taken the Levites instead of the First-born*; Hence 'tis, most probable, the *First-born* were they who imposed *Hands* on the *Levites*.

Thirdly, By this *Act*, saith Mr. *Pool*, *they signified their transferring that Right of Ministering to God, from the First-born, in whose hands it formerly*

was. Very good: But who *should*, or who *could* give away the *First-Borns Right*, but themselves? We read, *Exod 24. 5. Moses set the young Men of the Sons of Israel, and they offered burnt Offerings*. Who were these Young Men? The *chaldæt* faith, בָּנֵי כָּבֵד *Primogeniti*, the First born. These were the Priests or Sacrificers, until the Levites had the Priesthood in their Tribe. So *Numb 3. 12. 'Tis certain, the First-born had many Priviledges [tho' *Esau* despise his Birth-right.]* Then the First-born must impose hands, and give away their Priviledges; but shall they who have no right give away another Man's Right?

Fourthly, The *First-born* were separated, *Exod. 13. 2. Sanctifie unto me every First-born*; in their Sanctification, there was a Separation. Now it is most probable, that they who were separated did separate the Levites, and not others. I insist upon this for a Reason I shall give hereafter; let our Opposites give better Reasons to prove they were not the *First-born*.

As this Practice came into the Church by God's Command, so it continued in the *Jewish* Church. Dr. *Lightfoot* tells us, that some Men who gave themselves to the study of the Law, became very Learned Men, which they might, the Law being in their own Tongue, and did *teach*, beside the Priests and the Levites: but none without being first ordained, and that with *imposition of hands*. Dr. *Owens* affirms the same; when the *Gospel-Church* was to be erected, the Apostles, with whom Christ had spoken of things pertaining to the *Kingdom of God*, *Acts 1. 3.* when a Deacon was to be set apart to his Office, they did it with *Imposition of bands*, *Acts 6. 6.* And so the Churches practised ever afterwards, *Acts 13. 3.* *1 Tim. 4. 14.* *1 Tim. 5. 22.* *Heb. 6. 2.* Of which Text more anon.

This was the Practice of the Churches next the Apostles, and ever since amongst the Fathers, Papists, and Protestants, both *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, *Independents*; I never saw in my time, while I was *Platform* there, nor ever heard since I came from *New England* [tho' I have en-*Ch. Dife.* quired] that any one was ordained to any Office in the Church without *Cap. 9.* *Imposition of bands*.

Tot. 5.

Thus the *Synod* held there * 1649, tells us, upon these *Hypotheses*, that * *And ap-* the Fraternity is the *μητρον δικαιου*, of the Power of the Keys; and that proved by Election gives the Essence. If there be no *Elders*, *Imposition of bands* may be the *Synod*, performed, by some of the *Britsh*, *Numb. 8. 10.* But there is a Difference held at *Borne* between the *First-born* there, and our private Brethren; and good reason from 1680. why they should impose Hands, and not our private Men. It was not so in the *Gospel-Church*: It is *Irrregular*, saith Dr. *Owens*. But by this we see how *Imposition of Hands* must be, and was in Practice.

In the next *Thesis*: The *Fifth*, they tell us, *In such Churches where there are no Elders, and the Church desire it, we see not why Imposition of bands may not be performed by the Elders of other Churches.* Ordinary Officers laid bands upon Officers of many churches. The *Presbytery* at *Ephesus*, laid bands ¹ *Tim. 4.* upon *Timothy* as *Evangelist*. The *Presbytery* at *Antioch*, laid bands upon ^{14.} *Act. 13. 3.* *Paul* and *Barnabas*. These Men do not tell us this is their *Judgment*, but they give us the *Holy Scriptures* for what they say. Whereas, the *Savoy Confession* gives us not one word of *Scripture*; but only tells us, where the *Essence* of a *Pastor* lies, *without imposition of bands*, which is denied. I must say with *Tertullian*, *Non recipio, quod extra Scripturam de tuo inferis.* *Si Apostolicum, cum Apostolis senti.*

• I find in the beginning of the Reformation of the Church of Scotland, when they came newly out of Popery, *Imposition of Hands* was not judged necessary ; as I read in the History put out by Mr. Calderwood. That Man of God, Mr. Robert Bruce [whose Name I honour] was not ordained thus, nor any other way, than I can learn, as if there were something in him extraordinary ; though I honour the Man, yet we must stick to our *Rules*, and *An. 1581.* not Mr. Bruce. But afterwards, they tell us, how Ordination is to be performed, viz. by *Fasting, Prayer, and Imposition of the Hands of the Eldership*.

After this, pag. 383. they make it *Indifferent*.

An. 1597. But at a general Assembly, it was ordered, That there be an Uniform Order touching Ordination of Ministers throughout the whole Realm, and that with *Imposition of Hands* ; and thus it holds to this day.

An. 1598. Mr. Bruce having preached many Years, would admit of *Imposition of hands* for *Confirmation*, but not for *Ordination*. Several denied him to be their lawful Pastor for want of *Imposition* ; but others owned him.

Mr. Bruce accepts of *Imposition* for *Confirmation* ; and Mr. Post imposes hands upon him.

First. As for *Imposition of Hands* for *Confirmation*, as it is used in *England*, after *Baptism*, I find not one word of it in all the History, nor did the Church of Scotland own it, that I find there.

Secondly. All this while, there is not one Scripture brought by those who opposed *Imposition* : Yet they had taken the Word of God for their only Rule, which is so express for *Imposition*, &c. which makes me wonder at Mr. Bruce, so holy a Man. But if they had no *Scripture*, had they no *Reasons*? Yes, they had one, and but one, and that a pitiful one too. Thus, *It being laid as a ground*, that none can receive *Ordination* to the *Ministry*, without *Imposition of Hands*, and that the *Ceremony* is proper to *Bishops*, it followed to follow, that none could enter into the *Ministry*, without the *Imposition of the Hands of Bishops*. This is all very strange that Mr. Bruce should admit of *Imposition of Hands* for *Confirmation*, when the *Bishops* do appropriate that to themselves as well as in *Ordination*.

How many things may be said to this, to shew the weakness of this ground ? Any understanding man may easily see ; but I forbear. The *Reputation of Presbyterian Government*, and put out the Year 1690. when *Bishops* are turn'd out, tell us in the fifteenth Section, That *None* comes into the *Ministry* by *Election and Ordination*, by laying on of the *Hands of the Presbyters*, which is a *means* of *communicating* *Authority* to him. Then it seems the Church of Scotland, where this fir was, can *impose Hands* in *Ordination* without *Bishops*.

By reading this History, I find the Government of the Church of Scotland, from the first beginning of Reformation, was *Presbyterian* ; wherefore it was no small injury to impose upon them Prelatical *Bishops*, unless they had been of Christ's *Institution*, which we are sure they are not. And that, our first Reformers in King Henry the Eighth, and in King Edward the Sixth's, did declare, That *Episcopacy* was no distinct Order from *Presbyters*, by *Divine Right*, but only a prudent Constitution of the Civil Magistrate, for the better Government of the Church.

SECT. II.*The Definition of Ordination.*

As to the word *Ordination*, I think Gris. de Valen. speaks right; the *Tim. 4. Dis.* word is taken from the Effect of that Ordinance, *Quia per Ordinationem 9. Q. I.* *aliquis in gradu quodam sive Ordinatio sive Ecclesiastica Dignitatis Constitutus*, p. 1. Some are Pastors, some are Teachers, some are Ruling Elders, some are Deacons, they are set or placed, *Exodo 3. 18.*, *Cor. 1. 28.* in such an Order in the House of God, by *Ordination*. Thus it hath passed for Currant many hundred Years in the Church, till yesterday, Election gave the *Effect*, and *Ordination* was but an *Adjunct*. I desire my Brethren but to give me that *Adjunct*, according to the Word of God, and we shall unite, tho' we differ in our Logical Notions.

What should be done where *Ordination* cannot be had? Something I had to say to it, but being none of our Question, I let it alone. It is more material to know what *Ordination* is, and being it is Essential to our Discourse, I will give the *Definition* of it. This being a sure Truth, That they who do not give the *Definition*, they do but mock the Person to be ordained, and abuse the *Ordinance*, for he is not ordained. *Cui, evanescit Definitione, tamquam Convenit Definitionem: Et e contrario, secundum modum ordinacionis, non est Ordinationem sive, separationem a Personae rigitè qualificatae pro work of the Ministry, by reaching Elders, with Fasting, Prayer, and Imposition of Hands.*

Something I had thought to have spoken about the *Qualification* [Whereon I see these men's Practices with no content, their way being to debase the Ministry] but the *Great lying molt* in the *Ordainers* and *Impositions of Hands*, I shall speak to these two Heads.

That it belongs to *Teaching Elders*, *Act. 13. 3. Tim. 1. 4. 14.* I prove it. Here the People rise up, and claim Right by Virtue of their being the *new Apostles*, of the flower of the Keys: And I have seen it practised. Two Private Persons imposed their Hands upon an Ancient grave Divine, who was ordained, I believe, near 40 Years before in *England*, &c. They gave him the *Effect*, in giving him a *Call*, and so they gave him the *Adjunct*. And this being the Opinion of these men here, I prefer their *Ordination* with *Imposition of Hands*, and would own him for a *Gospel Minister*, before them whom you ordain [as you suppose] without *Imposition*. And if *Ordination* be no more than *Prayer* and *Fasting*, what need of you [according to the Principles of *Independency*] in another Church. It is not *Prayer*, *Preaching*, and *Fasting*. Tho' I grant *Preaching* is very comely at such an *Ordinance*; yet *Teaching* is no *Ingredient* into the *Ordination*: The People can *Fast* and *Pray* as well as you. I observed, while the hands of these private Persons were upon the Head of their *Parlor*, one of them made such a *Prayer* as might become any *Minister*, it was so *opposite* to the *business* in hand, that I could but wonder at it; and I believe it was his own *Composition*.

Whether

Mr. Nath. Ward use to say,
They were the first Subject of the
Key-Clog, not the Keys: So
they have proved in many
Churches, I am sure.

(63)
Whether the Fraternity be the first Subject of the Pow-
er of the Keys; I have spoken to it several Years since in
another Tract. I add but a few words now.

In the Common Wealth, the People are before the
Magistrate: In the Church, the Ministry is before the
People. Thus it began with the Apostles, they were
first, and after them by a continual Succession of the Ministry the Church is
continued. The Ministry is the Instrument in God's Hand, which he useth
commonly or chiefly, for the bringing in, and building up of his Church,
2 Cor. 6. 1. Ephes. 4. 11; 12. The principal Cause and the Instrument work
together, to the producing of the Effect; that then the effect of a Power,
should be the first Subject of that Power of which 'tis an Effect, is new Logick
to me.

Dr. Owen saith, *The church is before Ordinary Ministers.*

Ans. First, But is it before the *Ministry*? Else 'tis nothing.

Secondly, The Proposition is not true, ~~as I was told~~; that faithful and
laborious Servant of Christ Mr. Eliot [whom I know and honour] Mr. Mabie,
Mr. Leverick, with great Labour and Industry, get the *Indian Language*, and
preach'd to the *Indians*; they were but ordinary Ministers. God blesseth
their Preaching: The *Indians* some of them are converted, gathered into a
Church: Were they a Church before these *Ministers*? And were they the first
Subjects of the Power of the Keys, before these *Ministers* preached to them?

Let the Scriptures, in the Languages, that the Spirit of God inspired his
Pen-men to write them, be sent to a People who never saw them, nor heard
of them. Let this People understand them, believe them, embrace them,
give themselves up to them without any *Ministry*, to translate, to interpret,
and to help them to understand and believe; I will allow this People to be
the *Subiectum Primum, Secundum, Tertium*, of all the Power of the Keys,
but not else.

Secondly, There are others who lay claim to this, and inappropriate it to
themselves, as belonging to them only, i. e. *Bishops*, as being of a Superior
Order above *Teaching Elders*: Thus Bishop *Gawden* told me, it was out of
Courtesie, that the *Bishop* admitted *Presbyters* to *impose Hands* with them in *Ordination*. Thanks to this Courteous Bishop. I thought they had followed the
fourth *council of Carthage*: But if *Presbyters* do *impose Hands* with the *Bishop*, then the Superiority of the *Bishop* above the *Presbyter*, in *Ordination*, is
gone: For *Imposition of Hands* is the Principal thing in *Ordination*, as I
will prove anon, because *one* prays at the *Imposition*; that argues no Su-
periority of Power in him.

All *Bishops* were not of this *Bishop* *Gawden's* mind; not that *Bishop* of *Peter-
borough*, who when he ordained many at one time, but then take notice,
That he did ordain them as *Presbyter*. He spoke not without Reason;
for no Ministerial Acts in the Church are valid, but such Acts as are per-
formed by Ministers of Christ's *Institution*. They who are Officers in the
Church by Civil or Ecclesiastical Constitution, all their Acts as such, signi-
fie nothing. But his being a *Bishop*, and so superior to a *Presbyter*, was
by no *Institution of Christ*, had only *jus Humanum* to Warrant his Auth-
ority, and therefore he did not ordain as such a *Bishop*, but as *Presbyter*. Two I know, Mr. *Statham*, (as I heard) and Mr. *Samuel Smith*, who were
then Ordained: Mr. *Smith* spake of it often, what the *Bishop* said to them,
and had them take notice of it: Had Mr. *Smith* lived till now, he had
been

been about 78 years of Age; suppose him to be Ordained about 25 years of Age, some by this may guess what the Name of that Bishop was about 53 years past. I have often thought of this; the meanest Officers in the Common-Wealth, be they *Bum-baiffes*, *Alt-Founders*, yet they must have *Law* for their Office to Warrant their Actings: But that in the House of God there should be such as look upon themselves as the Chiefest Officers in the Church, and yet can shew no Law from the Lord of the House to Warrant their Office; this is strange, what hath *jus Humanum* to do in the House of God? Is not the Wisdom of the Great God Sufficient to know what Officers to appoint in his House, but sinful Man must set up Officers, and suprem Officers too, without him? Thus *Bishop Gardiner* told me; *The Bishop is the Supreme Officer*, [He should have said the *Arch-Bishop*] in the church; you Presbyters are but the Pipe-slaves, *the Bishop is the Hoop that holds you together*. An excellent similitude; I desired him to tell me who should be the *Cooper* to knock on this *Hoop*, I doubt (I told him) the *Pope* would swear by his Keys, that he must and will be the *Cooper*. And *Bellarmino* will maintain it by his Argument a *Simili*, &c. *De Romano Pontifice* mibi. 204. He told me moreover, *you Presbyters are no more able to manage the Government of the church of England, than David was able to wield Saul's Armour.*

The Government of the Church of *England* is a hard word, there needs an Interpreter. We poor Presbyters look only to the Government of our particular Flocks, whom we feed with the Word and Sacraments, over whom God hath made us Bishops, *Act 20. 17, 28.* If all the particular Congregations in *England* (supposing them to be visible Saints) were so governed, then by an Induction of particulars, it might be so call'd.

We do not indeed in our Government use *Writs de Excommunicato capiendo, Prisons, Fines, Cutting off Ears*; these are *Saul's Armour*, but none of *Paul's spiritual Weapons*, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* with which we are content: If it be well examined, it will be found that the *Zeal* of his Government hath been carried out against Conscientious Men, who for *Doctrine, Worship, Discipline*, stuck close to the Word of God, without admitting any Humane Inventions to juggle with him; I say the *Zeal* has been carried out against those far more than against Whore-mongers, Drunkards, profane Swearers, Dam'mees, &c.

I can but take notice of *Dr. Lightfoot*, that learned Man and Son of *Vol. 2.* the Church of *England*, living in the times of our Persecution, who de- 787, 788. nys Bishops to be Successors to the *Apostles*. *And that it is an improbable and unconstant Inference, that because there was Subordination between the Apostles and Philip.* (in *Act 8.*) *that therefore the like is to be reputed betwixt Bishops and other Ministers.*

I have done with this; I only aimed at this; *Teaching Elders may Ordain*, and we have Divine Authority for it in the Texts before mentioned: These we are sure are Officers in the Church by Christ's Institution; *The Lutherans have Bishops, yet they deny any inequality *jure Divino*, between Bishops and Presbyters, quod Postulat Jurisdictionis.* Therefore *Gerrard* answering *Bellarmino* appropriating *Ordination* to Bishops saith, *there is not one title in all God's Book, that Ordination by Bishops should be valid, but* *Dt Min. 261.* *Eccles. p.* *by Presbyters should be Null.*

The next thing is, it must be performed with *Imposition of Hands*: I named five Scriptures for this before,

What

What Dr. Owen saith, *Ordination of Ministers is the thing, Imposition of hands is whilom, differing as the whole and the part.* I yield it by this word, he meant mean *totum in partem*, it cannot be *totum ad partem*, but we say in Logick *separata qualiter pars tollitur pars non integrum, sed sublatam pars principali tollitur integrum.* Then I say where there is not *Imposition of hands*, there is no *Ordination*, for this *Imposition* is the *principal part*, and so *tollitur integrum*.

That it is the *principal part* I prove, and this shall be my first Argument.

1st. The Spirit in the Apostles, sets forth the whole *Ordination of Ordination*, only by *Imposition of Hands*, but never by *Eating and Prayer*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. *not laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. *Lay Hands on no man suddenly.* That in those Texts *Ordination* is meant, and not *confirmation*, nor *reception of penitents*, nor the *Sick*. I have proved in another Tract, so that I insist not upon them. Heb. 6. 2. This my Brother with whom I now deal, denies to be *Ordination*, but it is meant of *Confirmation*, and bids me see Dr. Owen so interpreting it.

I honour the Doctor, and will consider him when I have first proved it is meant of *Ordination*. If Mens judgments be worth any thing then for learning and Holiness, we have very eminent Men for it. Arch-Bishop Usher, Mr. Cartwright, Dr. Lightfoot, Mr. Thomas Hooker, Gualter, Tassanus, Basinger, Gilley, Dijon, Jonson, Jacob. These understand it only of *Ordination*.

Other Divines of *Confirmation* and *Ordination*, and *

* Because my Brother charges me with my false Quotation of Mr. Cartwright, take his words on Heb. 6. 2. *By Imposition of Hands the Apostle meaneth no Sacrament, much less confirmation after Baptism, but by a Trope or borrowed Speech, the Ministry of the church upon the which Bands were laid, which appeareth in that whatsoever believeth not, there ought to be a Ministry by order to Teach and Govern the Church, overthroweth Christianity.*

I lay the Foundation for my Proof, in these Words, *μη ταῦτα διδόνει γενικά πάντοις.* 1. 5. *not laying again the Foundation.* This then is a Fundamental point. Foundation must last as long as the House lasts. *Confirmation by extraordinary Gifts* conveyed in the *Imposition of Hands*, do not last so long as the Church lasts, the Church hath lost this above Fifteen hundred Years: But the *Ministry* intended in this place, shall last to the end of the World, Mat. 28. 20, till the Body of Christ be perfected, Ephes. 12. 13.

Therefore this is the Foundation.

The other Heads of Catechism that are join'd with it, must last to the end of the World. And if *Baptism*, then the *Ministry*, that have the Command from Christ, to *Teach and Baptise*, Mat. 28. 20.

2dly. Let it be observed, that the *extraordinary Gifts* which were given sometimes, by *Imposition of Hands*, were given first to the Jewish Christian-Church, and then to the Gentiles, *without Imposition of Hands*, Acts 2. 2, 3, with Acts 10. 44, 45, 46. This is very material. Do you then shew us two Texts where the Apostles separated Men to the *Ministry* without *Imposition of Hands*; as *extraordinary Gifts* were given first, both to Jews and Gentiles, without *Imposition of Hands*; and to Cornelius and his good Company before *Baptism*, Acts 10. 47.

3dly, We have other Scriptures, where *Imposition*, &c. is put for *Ordination*; I named two. Do you name one more where *Imposition of Hands*, mentioned alone, is put for *Confirmation*.

4thly,

4thly. Imposition of Hands in Ordination to Office, was before ~~Imposition~~ of Hands to the Collation of extraordinary gifts, and more frequently mentioned; therefore the more reason why it should be so understood here, and not excluded.

The placing of *Imposition*, &c. in the Text after *Baptism*, does not prove it to be meant of *confirmation*, no more than the placing of *Faith in God*, after *Repentance* will prove that *Repentance* goeth before *Faith in God*; whereas if a Man do not first believe God to be, and such a God as the Word declares him to be; yea, if he do not believe the Resurrection and the last Judgment, he will hardly *Repent*.

5thly. *Cornelius* and his Friends, the Gentiles, had those Gifts Conferred before *Baptism*, *Acts 10. 45, 46, 47, 48.*

6thly. Let them prove that all that were *Baptized* had these Gifts Conferred after *Baptism*. This made Dr. O. so to expound it, because it follows *Baptism* in the Text.

As for Dr. Ower's Reasons against Ordination *I see no reason*, saith he, *why the apostles should pass from the Doctrin of the first entrance of Christian Religion, and proceed to the Ordination of Ministers, omitting the Lords Supper.*

7thly. *Nor why he should insert the observation of this Rite, or the Doctrin concerning it, in the same Order, and under the same necessity with the other great Fundamentals, &c.*

Answ. 1st. And what *necessity* was there of his inserting extraordinary Gifts, common to godly and ungodly, and which were to expire in a short time amongst the Fundamentals.

2dly. *Gospel Worship* is a fundamental point, and it was Christ's pleasure to have a *Gospel Ministry* to carry on that *Worship* to the World's End; and under that *Rite*, the *Ministry* is meant, *Hebr. 4. 11. 12, 1 Cor. 12. 28.*

3dly. Under *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper* might be comprehended, being * So Dr. the other Sacrament * or being those were the Catechetical Heads, which Gouge's the *Novices* learned before they were *Baptized* and admitted into the Church ^{Baptism} (as *Baptism* and *Repentance* went together in *John's Baptism*, *Matthew 3.*) ^{Synecdoche} *so here Baptism and Repentance are mentioned, but for the Lords Supper, chice is they might be further instructed after they were in the Church, before ^{put for boath} they were admitted to it.* ^{Sacra-}

4thly. There is not such a *necessity* of *Baptism*, as of *Faith* and *Repentance*; yet *Baptism* is mentioned amongst those Heads.

The Prophets under the Old Testament prophesied of these Gifts, that they should be poured out saith the Dr.

Answ. True, but the Prophets do not say, they should be conferred by *Imposition of Hands*, and so to be made a Catechetical Head under the New Testament.

5thly. So do several of the Prophets foretell; what *asons* the Lord will give to his Church under the time of the *Messiah*. But to make an end with Dr. Ower to whom you refer me; He gives us four *Cases* in which this *Imposition of Hands* was used. The *Second* he mentions was in *healing of Diseases*, *Mark 16. 18.* &c. This cannot be the meaning here, saith he, for this gift was extraordinary, otherwise, *Temporary*, *Proper to the Apostles*; *Adams* had an

Upon the same grounds, it cannot be meant of *confirmation*. For the *Gift* was *extraordinary*, *Temporary*, *Proper to the Apostles*; *Adams* had an immediate

immediate Call to it, *Act 9. 10, 11. 17.* Philip had no such power, or Gift in *Act 8.* And after the Apostles we read of none that could, or did confer Gifts extraordinary by *Imposition of Hands.* What he means by *occasional,* I know not. I know no word of Healing unless People were sick. *2dly.* But I read in the Dr. p. 34. thus, *We shall allow room also for that other exposition of the words which is more generally received,* (I suppose he means *Ordination*) *because it complies with the Analogy of Faith: I dare not be peremptory.* Then the Dr. is not absolutely against me.

So much for my first Argument.

I go on,

2dly. Ordination is an Act of Authority, but Prayer and Fasting are no Acts of Authority. These are the Duties belonging to all Christians. I would desire no more Blessings than many good Women can pray for. Therefore Prayer and Fasting do not make Ordination.

The Major only remains to be proved, *Act 6. 3. 6. Κατατίθεσθε, whom we may appoint, &c.* Tho' the Persons were qualified, tho' elected by the Church, yet they were not in that *Order of Deacons,* till the Apostles put them into it Authoritatively, *Imposing their Hands upon them.* And this is common with all Presbyters, *Tit. 1. 5. Κατατίθεσθε.* The same word we had before. This word I find several times in the New Testament, belonging to a Person in Authority, giving Authority to others, as *Act 7. 10. and 27. and 35. Matth. 24. 45. 47. Matth. 25. 21. 25, &c.*

What Mr. Ainsworth saith of the First born imposing their hands upon the Levites, I think 'tis true: *By this sign, they did put the charge and Service of the church upon them, and did consecrate them to God in their Name.* So I think the Presbytery in their *Imposing of hands* do impose the charge, the burden, the work of the Ministry upon the Persons ordained, giving them Authority from the Lord, to go forth and Preach, and Administer all the Holy things of God with Authority. As the Church of Scotland saith, *It is a mean of Communicating Authority to the person Ordained.* Well may the Apostle say, *Lay hands upon no Man suddenly.* See it in a civil Case, *Numb. 27. 18, 19, 20. Joshua must stand before the High-Priest and the whole Congregation: Moses must lay his hand upon him, a sign of his calling, and Ordination to his Office. v. 23. Moses did so, and gave him his charge.*

Thus if strangers hearing there is an Ordination come in among you, there they may hear Preaching and Prayer; but who is the person to be ordained, they cannot tell by Preaching and Prayer, but when a person is brought forth, and the Presbytery Impose their Hands upon him and pray, now they may know who the Person is.

3dly. If Prayer and Fasting be Ordination without *Imposition of hands,* then as oft as Ministers meet together, to keep days of Fasting and Prayer, and pray for him who is the Pastor of that Church where they meet, for increase of grace, gifts, blessing upon and success in his Work, so oft the Man is ordained; are not these the Heads you pray for, when you Ordain in your way? What Heads have you more? Not only in the Sacraments; but in all Church-Ordinances, there is something which visibly shews a difference between that Ordinance and another. As the Eyes and Hands lifted up to Heaven in Prayer, visibly shew a difference between Prayer and Preaching, and so in Preaching from Prayer; but according to you, there is nothing whereby Ordination differs from other Ordinations.

Fourthly, *Acts 13.3.* That here in *Ordination*, I meet with seventeen Divines besides Dr. Owen, that acknowledge it, and the Definition of Ordination is here seen. When God commanded them to separate, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, &c. He did not tell them how they should separate, they knew that before, and accordingly did it with *Imposition of Hands*; they had learnt that from *Numb. 8. 10. 14.* the positive Command, where the word separate is used.

If ever *Ordination* might have been spared, then here; for what did this signify to the poor ignorant Gentiles to whom they were sent, that knew nothing of it? And if they had told them they were thus Ordained, what cared they for it? They carried their Credentials with them, the power of *Miracles*, to confirm their Doctrine. If the Church did Pray and Fast for success upon their Ministry, but what need *Imposition of Hands*? Not to confer Gifts, they were qualified before, *Paul, Acts 9. 17.* *Barnabas, Acts 11. 24.* and for *Teachers* to Confer *Gifts* extraordinary, we read none. They were called to separate, by an *immediate command* or *Call of God*. So *Paul* was no *Apoptle of Men*, *Gal. 1. 1.* Tho' Men did Ordain, yet what they did, being by the immediate Call and Command of God, he may be said to be an *Apoptle* not of Men, or by Men.

But this is observable: This *Ordination* is the first that ever was out of *Judea*. *Antioch* then the chief City of *Syria*, the most powerful City of *Asia*, where the *Prefect* of the *East* most where resided, called by some the *Gentiles Jerusalem*. Here then in a City of the *Gentiles*, is the *Apoptle* of the *Gentiles*, set apart to the Work of an *Apoptle* among the *Gentiles*. And I cannot tell what use to make of it, since as I said, the *Gentiles* neither knew it, nor regarded it, but it is of use to us, to shew us that as the *Apoptle* of the *Gentiles* was separated to his Work, so all Ministers that are the *Successors* of the *Apoptles*, should be separated to their Work; that as they were thus separated in the *Jewish Church*, so it should be in the *Gentile-Chrillian Church*.

Objection. *But Paul was an Apoptle before.*

Answer. I will deny it. For, if. Then the Text would have called him so. The Text tells us there were *Prophets and Teachers*, but he doth not say there were *Apostles*. Surely *Paul* should have had the Title of his Office, if he had been an *Apostle*, as well as the *Prophets* had.

2dly. The Lord tells *Ananias, Acts 9. 15.* *Paul was a chosen Vessel, to carry his name among the Gentiles.* But this was not done till now.

3dly. *Paul* was never called an *Apostle* till after this, *Acts 14. 14.*

Lastly, When the *Apostle* chargeth *Timothy 1 Tim. 5. 22.* *Lay hands suddenly on no man*, the *Affirmative* is implied, *he ought to lay hands*, if he found a Person worthy *in mandato negativo*. *Affirmationem continetur.* Thus I have given you my Definition; and proved by several Scriptures; now Brother, give me your Definition; and prove it by Scripture; you indeed have not alledged that, *Acts 14. 23.* but two others have brought that Text against me, to prove that *Electio* (from the word *χριτονοῦσας*) with *Prayer* and *Fasting*, without *Imposition of hands*, makes a *Minister*.

4th. This Text, I see by *Lutherans* and *Catholicks*, is brought to prove the Peoples right in *Electio*; Dr. *Owen* hath made great use of it, so *Dr. Hale*, so *Gerard*, makes great use of it; but when they have done so, yet they all tell us, a *Man* is not a *Minister* as yet, but *Ordination* must be, and that as I defined it.

2dly. I think it is a good rule to help to understand the Scriptures, if one Text be obscure, and there be clearer Texts in the Scripture speaking to the same thing: Carry the obscure Text to them, which are clear. We have several clear Texts for Ordination with imposition of Hands, but not one now that gives the least shadow to prove such an Interpretation as this. It falls out very unhappy with some Men, saith Dr. Owen in another Case, who think they see some peculiar Opinion, in some singular Text of Scripture, and will not bring their Interpretation of it to the Analogy of Faith, and see how contrary it is to the Current of the Periods in other places.

3dly. Paul knew how Imposition of Hands in separation to Office, came into the Jewish Church, by the positive Command of God, and how it continued in that Church. Secondly, He knew the Practices of the Apostles. Now, Thirdly, He knew how he himself was separated. Fourthly, He can tell Timothy how he, i. e. Timothy, was separated, and charge him that he take care how he laid Hands upon others. Can any rational Man think, that Paul now would in these Churches, separate Men to Office without Imposition of Hands? I think no Rational Man will believe it. Why then is this Text abused?

For my part I am for the Peoples Election, provided it be carried on regularly; and look upon this Imposing of Ministers by Patrons upon the People against their Consent, as cursed Tyranny.

But for my own part (giving honour to these worthy Men, far more learned than my self) I am not satisfyed, that this *χειροτονία* in this Text, whatever the Etymology of the word was at first, must necessarily note the Act of the People *lifting up their Hands* in Election of their Officers. I rather consider how the word is used, in that Age or Time when Men write. 'Tis well known that words in time do vary in their signification from what they did at first. Among divers others, we have one in Scripture, *ιυργανατα*, Epis. 5. 4. Aristotle tells us how the Word was first used, and who was *ιυργανατος*, a Man that was factious, pleasant, Witty, but withal cleanly in his Discourse: But afterwards in his time, if a Man did seem to be Witty, shol. Scarrious and base, he now was *ιυργανατος*. Divers such words we have in the Latin, and English Tongue. Philo and Paul were Contemporaries, and how Philo useth the Word *υετορεια*. Dr. Hammond, has given us an account out of his Works. Likewise out of *Lucian*, and *Maximus Tyrius*. Where the word is used of single persons, so that the word did not in those times signifie the suffrages of the People, and the Word in Holy Writ, *Acts 10. 41.* *ωνται χειροτονίαις* being given to God: Plainly carry it, that the Word doth not always intend or force the Peoples Suffrage, whatever the Etymology of the Word signifieth, upon which Gerhard lays his stress. I have not seen that piece of Mr. Stedman, but Mr. Rawell told me he had made it clear that *χειροτονία* had lost that signification these contend for, many years before Christ.

2dly. That Rule which Henry Stephens gives us, concerning *χειροτονία*; I take to be very true; *When this word governs an Accusative Case, then it signifieth but to create, Ordain.* Thus he. Now in this Text, *Acts 14. 23.* it doth so, *χειροτονίας της εκκλησίας*. But in *Cor. 2. 8-19.* which these Men urge to confirm their Opinion, there is no accusative Case, but *χειροτονίας υπό την εκκλησίαν*. He was chosen of the Church. Let me add to this, the *Syriack Version*: I doubt not but that Translator did understand the Etymology

*Ethi. 1. 4.
Cap. 14.*

Philo flourished in Caligula's Time, and wrote before Paul. Dr. Hammond, has given us an account out of his Works. Likewise out of *Lucian*, and *Maximus Tyrius*. Where the word is used of single persons, so that the word did not in those times signifie the suffrages of the People, and the Word in Holy Writ, *Acts 10. 41.* *ωνται χειροτονίαις* being given to God: Plainly carry it, that the Word doth not always intend or force the Peoples Suffrage, whatever the Etymology of the Word signifieth, upon which Gerhard lays his stress. I have not seen that piece of Mr. Stedman, but Mr. Rawell told me he had made it clear that *χειροτονία* had lost that signification these contend for, many years before Christ.

mology of the word as well as any of us; now in this verse he renders the word they did *constitute*, or *Ordain* (a) the very same *Syriac* word, which is used in *Tit. 1. 5.* *Ordain Elders*. But in the *2 cor. 8. 19.* there he uses a (a) ²⁰⁰ another word, to *raise*, (b) and doubles the Verb, as the *Hebrews* do, which the *Latin* Translation gives thus, *deligendo dilectus sit*. So the vulgar *Tran.* (b) ²⁰⁰ *flation, Constituent.*

3dly, The Gramatical Construction is more to me than a Criticism: when *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned to *Antioch*, v. 22. they returned, *τιμηγόττοις, confirming the Souls, &c.* παρατάλαύρεις, *Exhorting them to continue, &c.* These two were *Paul* and *Barnabas's* *Act*, then *χριστονεύσεις*, *Paul* and *Barnabas* *lifted up their hands*, if the word must signifie so from the *Etymology* of the word, this was as much their *Act* as the former. Let any School-Boy construe it, tho' the Boy can tell you the *Etymology* of the word. Then we shall have a new fashion of *ordaining*, by *Ministers fasting, praying, and lifting up their hands*. Besides, for the word *αὐλαῖς*, how will that agree with the Peoples lifting up their hands, what fair sense shall we make of it? But if we take the word as we see it was used in that time, and as *H. Stephens* saith, if it governs an *accusative case*, as it doth in this place, then the *Sense* runs smooth, *Paul* and *Barnabas did constitute or ordain them*, (i. e. the *Disciples* in the former verse) *Elders in every church, &c.*

4thly. It is certain the Greek Fathers did use their word *χειροτονία* for *Ordination*: Surely they understood their own Mother tongue as well as we. I have observed *Chrysostom* in all those Texts where *Imposition of hands* is mentioned; he useth *χειροτονία*. *Gerhard* confesseth that *Chrysostom* and other *Ecclesiastical writers*, do so use it. And tho' he stick to the *Etymology* of the word to maintain the Peoples right of *Election*, yet *Ordination* he saith must be with *Imposition of hands*, therefore he saith in the next word *κατεύχαμενοι: χειροτονίας δεμνον fit mentio*, in their *praying*, they *Imposed hands*. Thus he.

As to these Fathers who thus use the word *χειροτονία*, had they been against the *Election* of the *People*, then I should have suspected their *In- tegrity* in their use of the Word, but the *People* then had their *Election* of their *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. And one thing I took notice of in the 5th. Century; I read of one *Syndicus*, a *Man* of very good parts, who was to be *Ordained Bishop of Syrene*; But when he should be *Ordained*, he did not believe the *Resurrection of the Body*, yet the *People* who had *elect- ed* him, were so earnest to have him *Ordained*, that *Theophilus Alexan.* did *Ordain* him, hoping he might believe it afterwards; as he did. When I read it, I thought what a difference there was between those times, and ours, they could *Ordain* a *Bishop*, who did not believe one of the *Articles* of the *Apostles Creed* (as it is called) but the *Church of England* could cast out about eighteen hundred *Ministers*, but for what? was it because they did not *assent* to the *Doctrine* of the *Church of England*? I heard *Mr. Har- mar* should tell *Bishop Reynolds*, if you can maintain the *Discipline* of the *Church*, the *Dissenters* must maintain the *Doctrine* of the *Church of England*) was it because they were *scandalous* in their *Conversation*? was it because they were *idle* and *lazy*? was it because they did not *worship* *God* ac- cording to *His Word*? *Blessed be God*, they could charge us with none of these things, for what then? Let them answer that when they come to appear before their and our *Judges*. They were *Church-Men* and *Bishops* that made that *Act* against us.

S E C T.

S E C T. III.

Now to your Reason, why you Ordain without *Imposition of Hands*, that which you chiefly insist upon is this.

There is neither Scripture, Precept, nor President, for ordinary Officers, of one Church, to impose Hands in the Ordination of an Officer in another Church. Answ. *First*, What need of such Presidents, while Apostles and Evangelists were living? *Secondly*, This Argument of yours plainly implies, that there is Scripture Precept, and President, to ordain in another Church, so it be without *Imposition of Hands*: It lies upon you to shew, where that Precept or President is. I know no such Texts; you acted, did you act in Faith; that you acted according to God, and were well-pleasing to God, in your ordaining without *Imposition of Hands*? Then shew us that Divine Testimony upon which your Faith for so acting, is grounded: You never gave me one as yet; and if you cannot do it, your Faith in this Act is but vain. If there be any thing I do in the House of God, for which I cannot give either *Precept, President, necessary consequence*, from *Scripture or light of Nature*, I will lay by that Act, I will not trouble the Peace of the Church, nor hinder Union with my Brethren, by keeping up such Practices.

Thirdly, The Apostles did not constitute Churches as you do, with one single Pastor, &c. In Nine Churches we find several Teachers, but not one with a single Teacher. In a Young Church at *Antioch*, *Act. 13. 2, 3.* There were three Teachers to separate *Paul* and *Barnabas*. There is an Errour then in your Constitution, and that does not justify your Error in Ordination.

Fourthly, Give me a President, where the Pastor of one Church did so much as preach or pray in another Church; if you cannot, then we must not so much as preach or pray in another Church: But you have called me and others to preach in your Church.

To this you answered me, *You could not do that, from Matt. 28. 19. go teach all Nations; if so, then in other Churches.*

Answ. First, Set by Presidents then, it seems you can find none.

Secondly, I may deny your *consequence*, at least according to some Independent Principles, unless I preach as a *gifted Brother*. To preach to the Nations who were *Heathens*, and to preach in an *Independent Church*, differ. I may preach to *Heathens* as a *Minister of Christ*, but in an *Independent Church*, as a *gifted Brother*. I wish we knew the first Author of this Distinction, that we might scratch his *cranium*, for so witty an Invention.

What your judgment is as to this distinction, I cannot tell. But I am of Dr. *Owens* mind: *If I did not think myself bound, saith he, to Preach as a Minister, and as a Minister Authorized, in all places, and on all occasions, unless I am called thereto, I think I should never preach much more in this world.*

Fifthly, If that Text will warrant me to preach in another Church, it will warrant me to *Baptize* in another Church, if there be need, and I am called to it. They are joined together; and if I may put forth two Acts of Authority, I may also put forth a third: If there wants a Pastor, and I am called to join with others to separate him to his Office, we will do it according to the Word, with *Fasting, Prayer, and Imposition of Hands*, without

without which 'tis not *Ordination*: We do not give him the *Definition*.

Sixtly, Since then we are come to *consequence from Scripture*; I gave you a Scripture, *1 Cor. 12. 12*. *The Body is one*, and hath many *Members*, &c. He does not mean that particular Church of *corinth*, is that *one Body*: he adds, *so is Christ*, v. 13. Jews and Gentiles make up that one Body. v. 25. *The Members of this one Body, must have the same care one of another*. Does the *Apolle* tie up his Discourse to the Church of *corinth*, that the *Members* of that Church should have *care one of another*? and if one of their *Members* did *suffer*, v. 26. all the rest of the *Members* of *corinth* *suffer with them*, but for other Churches take no care of them: If they suffer, you need not suffer with them. Certainly, this was not the *Apostles* meaning. I look upon all particular Churches to be *Members* of that *one Body*: It is such a Church, in which *christ* hath *set Apostles, Prophets, &c.* v. 28. It is such a Church, where some are as *Eyes*, others as *Ears*; some as *Feet*, some as *Hands*, veres 15, 16. Therefore he speaks of the *Visible Church*. If every particular Church were the *Body of Christ*, how many *Bodies* should *Christ* have? But he hath but *one Body*, as the 12th. verſe, and *Ephes. 4. 12.* tell us. Since then all particular Churches are but *Members* of that *one Body*, and the *Lord* hath commanded the *Members* to have *care one of another*. Surely, the *Lord* hath not confined the *Ministerial Power* of a *Pastor*, to his own particular Church; so that if a Neighbour-Church have no *Pastor*, that the *Pastors* near to this Church may not help that Church to a *Pastor*, and in that way which his *Word* hath declared. Your *Practice* testifieth it; for you would make the Person to be *ordained*, and others believe, you *ordain* in another Church; and this is an *Act of Authority*, but not as you perform it, nor according to *God's Word*, and so it is no *Ordination*.

There is a difference between a *Ministers* helping another Church deſtitute of an *Officer*, in feeding them with the *Word* and *Sacraments*, a joyning with others in the *Ordination* of a *Pastor* to them, and exercising *Discipline* in that Church, in case of *Scandal*. The Church hath some Power to help it ſelf in this Case, tho no *Pastor*.

For instance, a *Pastor* of a Church not far from us in the time of *Perſecution* leaves *England*, goes beyond-Sea many miles; this Church had none to feed them: they deſired help of their Neighbour *Ministers*, who accordingly did afford them help; ſome preached, ſome baptized their Infants, and others Adminiſtred the *Lord's Supper* to them. One of the Church fell very foully, being ſeduced by another *Professor*; the *Scandal* very great, ſo that the *Hearts* of good *People* very ſad, but our *Enemies* rejoiced; it made ſuch a noife in the Country, many miles about us, that the like I believe have not been known in these *Parts*. I was deſired to preach there; when I had done my *Sermon*, a *Writing* was delivered to me, wherein the Church deſired me to declare to the *Congregation* [which was then very great, being no *Sermon* in the publick place] their abhorrency of ſuch *Acts*, and withal deſired me to inform them what was their *Duty*, what they ought to do in ſuch a *Case* as this. I gave them my thoughts thus: You are but a *Homogeneal Body*, and ſo have no power to *Excommunicate*, that being an *Act of Authority*; nor have I any power to call the person to an account, and *excommunicate*: But yet this you may do, ſince the person was admitted into *Church-Fellowship* and *Communion* with your *conſent*, *ſhe*

she having fallen so foully, dishonoured God so greatly, and opened the mouths of Men against Godliness, you should first meet together, and humble your Souls before God, that there should be such Dishonour brought to his Name, by one of your Church. Then, *First*, You have the Lord's Supper Administred sometimes amongst you; there you may deny Communion with her. *Secondly*, You have times when your Church only meet together, for Prayer, mutual Conference, &c. You may there deny her Communion also; but when you meet publickly with others, there you should not deny, but she may be present at Prayer, being it is natural Worship; tho she were actually excommunicated, and rendered as a *Heathen*; I have seen the *Indians* present with us, at Prayer, and Preaching, tho' as yet they had not embraced Christianity. *Thirdly*, As for the Civil Familiarity you had with her before, you ought to suspend that too, 2 *Thes.* 3. 14. and verse 6. yet having a care of her, being in a poor condition, that she do not perish. *Fourthly*, You may choose three or four of your chief Members, and send them to her, to make her know, the Determination, of the church, and that the church doth this, *in the Name of the Lord Jesus*.

The Church did so, the effects of it was, the clamours of the People ceased; the Mouths of them who before were opened against us, were silent, and now they rather found fault with me, that I was too sharp upon the Person offending, the effect was a relenting, and humbling of her self before God in the publick Congregation, to the satisfaction of the Church, she is now dead, but the Church having then their *Pastor*, absolved her before she died: and it was a comfort to her: her *Absolution* was without money.

By this I see, were this Ordinance of Church Discipline carried on according to the word of God (which hath been so fearfully abused) we should need no *Writ de Excommunicato capiendo*: I did but add a few words, what the case of such a person was under this Sentence, and it struck an awe in the hearts of Carnal People.

To return to my Brother. To what I have said from the *one body* in the *Corinth. 12*. That the *Pastors* of Churches may help other Churches, where there are none, and they call to help them, you answer me.

This is all you have to say, and there is little to it.

Ans. No, not all, Brother; I gave you your own Text, whereby you proved that *Pastors* of other Churches may joyn with you in days of Fasting and Prayer, and preaching, and if so then in *Ordaining*.

Qdly. I gave you the Texts of Scripture, whereby the *Synod of N. Eng-* *land* proved, they might ordain in another church, with imposition of hands.

You tell me, you deny a Political-visible Catholick church.

Ans. So do I. If I said but little, I am sure you say too much. How dothit follow? Because we may help neighbour churches, when they call us to help them with *Pastors* in a *Gospel* way. Therefore I must own a *Political, visible, catholick church*. I gave you instance before, how Churches may help to putge themselves from scandalous persons, tho they have no Officers. If there be a Family by us where are several children, Parents both dead, and there is none that takes care of them to help them to food. It is one thing for me to go to the House, and help them with food, another thing to cast one of the children out of the House, if it be airois, refractory, and will not be recaulkted by council. The case is the

the same here ; twenty or forty Elders may meet to give Counsel in a Case, leaving the Execution to the Church whence the Case depends.

You tell me, *Ministers are not set over the whole Church, their Power may be refused in other Congregations.*

Ans. But they do not refuse their Power, when they *Call* for it, and desire to help them in their want. I limit the Power of Elders to other Churches, to the *Call* of those Churches, being in want. They are not therefore set over the whole Church.

When you with the two other Ministers [they go for such] did separate that illiterate Person to the Work of the Ministry, did you *Act* as *Officers* or as private *Brethren*? If you acted as private Brethren, then I am sure he is no Minister ; the Brethren of the same Society had more right than you. If you acted as Officers, then it seems you could not put forth Official Power in another Church. To separate to an Office, is an *Act* of Authority. *Whom we may appoint, [not the People] Act. 6. 3.*

You tell me, the *13 Acts 3.* is no Platform for us, unless we have an immediate Command from God to Ordain Men.

Ans. The immediate Command was in the separating *Paul and Barnabas* to the Work of their *Apostleship*. The Command was not to Teach them *how* they should separate ; the Lord faith only, *Separate, &c.* they knew how they should separate before. The Synod of *New-England* and *Dr. Owen* were much mistaken, who quote this Text for Ordination by *Imposition of Hands* : But to this Text I have spoken before.

As to what you say, *That Gifts were then Conferr'd with the Imposition of Hands.*

Ans. The end when the Lord first Commanded it, was not to Conferr Gifts, but to *separate*, Numb. 8. 10, 14. so *Acts 13. 3. Separate me Paul, &c.*

2. The *Savoy Confession* is against you, if there be Elders in the same Church, it calls for *Imposition of Hands*.

3. *Paul and Barnabas* were Gifted before, as I named the Texts.

4. The Deacons were Gifted before their Ordination, *Acts 6. 3.*

5. *Paul* then needed not to have given that Caution to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 2. that they be *inward*, to whom he Committed the Gospel-Doctrine ; for *Timothy* by the Imposing Hands might Conferr Gifts, and make them able, or fit Men for the Work.

6. As to what you gather from 1 Tim. 4. 14. for your Proof, that Text you know admits of Controversie : As whether *Timothy* was not first Ordained a Presbyter, and afterwards an Evangelist ? Whether *Paul's* Imposition and the Presbyters were both at the same time ? &c. but this is certain, laying the 1 Tim. 1. 18. and 2 Tim. 1. 6. together with this Text, there was something extraordinary as to *Timothy's* Gifts, in which the Presbyteries Imposition had no share ; the Propositions differ, it is *Διατελεσθαι*, by the *putting on of my Hands* ; but 'tis *μεταβλεπται*, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbiteries, after Prophecy. So that when *Paul* and the Presbiteries did both impose Hands, the *Gift* was conveyed as *Paul* faith, by *my Hands*. But as to his *Office* to a Potestate, Authoritative Mission, the Imposition of the Hands of the Presbiteries did concurr with *Paul's*.

You tell me, *I must own Succession, and those polluted Hands, &c.*

Ans. Your Argument speaks thus, If you will have no Ordination without

*See Didot-
clavius Al-
tare Damos.
p. 161.
Thus Gil-
lespy Mis-
p. 101.*

Imposition of Hands, according to Scripture, then you must own *Succision*. So I will: Was Imposition of Hands in Ordination, an Invention of *Rome*, or as Institution of *God*? the Papists can prove their Act in this Point by Scripture, so cannot you.

2. Mr. *Robinson*, Mr. *Johnson*, tho' rigid old Separates, yet worthy Men, made light of this Argument, because it was God's own Appointment.

3. You had best throw away *Baptism*, because their polluted Hands do administer it.

4. This concerns the first Reformers. We receive our Ordination from godly and learned men, who hate and have cast off whatever is *Romish*, but not the Holy Scripture, because they pass through *Rome* to us.

As to the Text you quote, *Phil. 3. 16. Wherunto we have already attained, &c.* this is nothing to our Case, nor will it heal.

Several there were who did believe in Christ, and embraced the Gospel, but were not so clear in the total Abolition of the Ceremonial Law, as *Rom. 14.* shews: But however since they had believed in Christ, and embraced the Gospel, walk according to that Rule unto which you have attained, God will reveal more in time: The Case is nothing like. You have attained to Fasting and Prayer in Ordination, but not to *Imposition of Hands*. But Fasting and Prayer we use and may use in twenty Cases, but these Cases do not make twenty distinct Ordinances, though we Fast and Pray: It is but one Ordinance. But Separation to the Work of the Ministry is a distinct Ordinance.

Secondly, *They were to walk by the same Rule*: But by what Rule do you walk? for the Rule is with *Imposition of Hands*, according to which you do not walk.

S E C T. IV.

After I had done with this Brother, there came to my Hand a little Book, put out by another Brother, who writes thus, *All Church-Officers are made by Ordination, and Ordained alike*; [is there no difference between *Acts 6. 6.* and *Acts 13. 3.*?] and that *Ordination is not Imposition of Hands*; and if the most be made of it, it's but a *Ceremony annexed*, which is now obsolete.

It's But a *Ceremony*: Whose *Ceremony* is it? Did *Man* or *God* Institute it? If it be *God's*, methinks it is not comely for a *Creature* to cast a slighting *Eye* upon any of his Institutions. What was the whole Ceremonial Law? yea, What is *Water* in *Baptism*, *Bread* and *Wine* in the *Lords Supper*, setting by the Authority of him who did Institute them? the *Image* of a *King* stamped upon a *Farthing*, tho' but a *Farthing*, who dare refuse it?

Though it be but a *Ceremony*, yet being *God's Institution and Command*, there is,

1. *Necessitas Precepti* annexed to it, and it is Disobedience to his Institution to Omit it. The *Spirit* is pleased three times to set forth the whole Work of *Ordination* by this *Ceremony* [as you call it] alone.

2. There is *Necessitas Medi*, in this sense, *viz.* To the sending forth of a Person to Preach and Administer all Ordinances in *God's House* with *Authority*. Dr. *Owen* rightly calls it, *The Symbol of Authoritative Ordination*. Our Brethren of *Scotland* call it, a *Medium*, of *Communicating Authority to the Person Ordained*. When the *Presbytery* *Praying and Imposing Hands*, do in the Name of the *Lord Jesus*, the *King* of his *Church*, Separate a *Man* to the *Work* of the *Ministry*,

nistry, the ~~Act~~ carries Authority in it. By the *Imposing their Hands*, they do Impose the Charge, the Burden, the Work of the Ministry upon the Person in the Name of the Lord. Persons in Authority do in the Name of the Lord Convey Authority.

The Apostle bids *Timothy*, 2 Tim 2. 2. *magistris, Commit the things, &c.* the Persons must be first *leared*, fit to Teach others, *ab*e* Men*, before he Commits them, this is plain. But then how doth *Timothy* Commit the things to them, when he finds them such? [*magistris, et Commandare, veluti Commendatur depositum servandum, & suo tempore reddendum*, Erasmus. So the Syriack, *Depositum in fidem alicuius*.] That it is an *Act of Authority*, Luk. 12. 48. is plain. *Timothy* does not Commit them by *Election*, that is the *Act of the People* you tell us; he could not do it by *Conferring Gifts*, he had no such Power: Besides, he must see they be such before he Commits them. He did not do it by *Prayer* for them, any might have so Committed as well as *Timothy*, and *Prayer* is no *Act of Authority*; but when *Timothy* Prays and *Imposes Hands* to separate them to the Work of the Ministry, which *Paul* charged him not to do it *suddenly*, 1 Tim. 5. 22. Now he *Commits* them: Now *Separation* to the Work is seen, and not before. So that when the Presbytery do *zeugnatives*, they do ~~ad~~ *gatt* *Sevas*.

After I had done, I met with Mr. *Gillesps* upon the Text, *Miscell.* p. 52. which he saith is a considerable Text against the *Socinians* and *Anabaptists*, *What work* [which this Practice of our Brethren, and crying up *Gifted Brethrens Preaching*, these *Gifted* have not a little strengthened, to the bringing in of Confusion and Disorder into *Brethren* the Church, as we see at this day, to the shame of *Reformation*] and he gives *have made* the fence of the Text as I have done, for *Ordination*, which in another place *in Churches*, he saith must be with *Imposition of Hands*. we see to our shame.

As to his saying that it is a *Ceremony now Obsolete*:

I thought the Word *Obsolete* did connote a thing out of Date, out of Use, worn thred-bare; but *Imposition of Hands* in *Ordination*, hath been used in the Jewish Church and the Christian Church in all Ages to this day, among all Churches; so that if it be *obsolete*, it must be only among some few *Independents* of yesterdays standing, and is this sufficient to make it *obsolete*?

One Word about *Popular Election*, because I see it is that which gives the Essence to a Minister in some Mens Opinion.

I am for the Peoples *Election*, provided it be regularly carried on; but that it makes a Minister, I cannot yield to that.

Mr. *Eliot* and those I mention'd before, Preach to the *Indians*, God works with their Ministry, brings some to the Faith in Christ, they are formed into a Church, they choose Mr. *Eliot* * to be their Minister, so then their *Election* makes Mr. *Eliot* a Minister; is not this pretty Logick, the Effect give the Essence to the Cause. If the People be visible Saints, they are ordinarily the Effect of the Ministry [tho' not of that particular Minister whom they choose it may be] as Ministers are said to be *overpoli*, and *overgyriles*, *Workers together with God*, Instruments in his Hand.

2. If the *Election* of a Deacon do not give the Essence to a Deacon, then the *Election* of a Minister does not give the Essence to a Minister, but the Antecedent is true, *Ergo*.

Unto all Church-Officers *Election* gives the Essence [as they say] and no wonder if the People be the *first Subject of the Power of the Keys*, as it is in these Mens Opinion; then if it doth not give the Essence to a *Deacon*, then not to another

¹ Cor. 3.6.

² Cor. 6.1.

Officer, nay, much less to a Minister ; for the People may be more able to judge of an Officer to serve Tables, than they are able to judge of the Abilities and Soundness of a Man to be chosen a Minister : But it did not so to a Deacon. *Whom We may appoint over this Business*, Acts 6. 3. say the Apostles. It was not their *Election* that did Constitution them Deacons, but the Apostles Authoritatively appointing them over this Business. *We appoint, not You appoint*. As *Pharaoh appointed Joseph's Governor over Egypt*, Acts 7. 10. the same Word, the Act of Authority.

3. A Man whom God hath qualified, may be Ordained to the Work of the Ministry, tho' there be no People to Elect him : As if one having gotten the Language of some Heathens, he may go and Preach among them, and if God bless his Ministry he may Baptize them, if there be but one or two at one time, as *Philip did the Eunuch*, and as the Apostles *Paul and Barnabas*, who were Ordained before they were sent forth to the Gentiles, [of which we see no need, as I said before, they carrying their *Credentials* with them, the Power of Miracles] but that Man cannot Baptize unless he be Ordained, he is not in Authority before he be Ordained.

So that true Qualification and Fitnes for the Ministry, and Authoritative Separation to the Ministry makes *A Minister* : Election of the People makes him *their Minister*.

4. Tho' I deny *Election* to give the Essence, yet suppose *Election* to be an Ingredient into it ; where two things meet together to the Constitution of an Officer, *Subjection and Authority* ; certainly *Authority* gives the Essence more than *Submission* ; thus Dr. *Owen*, the People Electing *Submit themselves* ; and Dr. *Ames** *evera. to. 2.* before him, answering *Bellarmin*, who made it strange, that *Sheep should choose their Shepherd* : *Yes, saith Dr. Ames, rational Sheep may choose their Shepherd, not by Jurisdiction, but by Subjection*.

5. The Scriptures which are for Ordination by *Imposition of Hands* are more in number, and far more clear than those for *Election* ; the first Text which they bring for *Election*, *Acts 1. 15.* this differs much from ours, for our *Election* is with *Submission* to him whom the People Elect : But this was not so. Did *Peter* [the Pope will be angry if you tell him so] and the other Apostles *submit themselves* to him whom they *Chose*? 2ly. It was choosing one of their own Order, not one above them, so does not Popular *Election*. 3ly. Tho' *Peter* did speak to all present, yet it does not appear that all present did choose, but the Apostles, for they could tell best, who had accompanied them all the time *the Lord Jesus went in and out among them*, V. 21, 22. Surely all that were present could not tell who those were as the Apostles. 4ly. They gave forth their *Lotts*, V. 25. 5ly. They Prayed to the Lord, to *shew whether of these two Thou hast chosen*, 24. Is this Text clear for *Popular Election*?

The 6 *Acts 3.* is the clearest for *Election*, but not of a *Pastor*. The 14 *Acts 23.* is much Controverted, and these are all I meet with for Popular *Election*. But for the other, we have *First*, God's own Institution. *Secondly*, We have *six* Scriptures more in the New Testament, which are plain for it, which makes me wonder how it came about that any Men of Learning should put so much upon *Election*, that it should give the *Essence* to a *Minister*.

6. The Peoples *Election* gives the *Essence* to a *Minister* : What, without his *Acceptation*? No sure. If ten Churches choose a Man, he may refuse them every one, he may have Reasons for it ; Where then is the *Essence* their *Election* gives? my *Acceptation* is every whit as essential to my being a *Minister*, as their *Election* ;

Election; why then is the *Causality* given to their Election? To be a Minister to them, that they may *demand* of me, and I be *bound* to administer all Ordinances to them, by way of Office, I grant here their Election and my Acceptation are essential: But to be a *Minister*, hath other Causes, where Popular Election hath no *Causality*.

That a People must subject themselves to a Minister, and perform all the Duties the Word of God require to a Minister, and yet not choose him, is Tyranny fit for *Rome*, not for the Church of Christ.

This Notion of Popular Election giving the *Essence* to a Minister, is the ground of that Witty Distinction of a Minister's Preaching; if he Preach to his People, that Chose him, then he Preaches as a *Minister*, but if in another Church, then as a *Gifted Brother*. And hence they must not Administer the Sacraments in another Church, tho' there be need, and the Church desire; he must not Act as a Minister beyond them who gave him the *Essence of a Minister*: And this they would prove or illustrate from a Mayor of a Corporation, who out of his Corporation hath no Power.

Ansf 1. In a Kingdom or Corporation 'tis sufficient there be a People *first*, of whom neither the King nor the Mayor are Causes in the least; in the Church 'tis not sufficient there be a People, but such a People, *viz.* Visible Saints, of whom God hath Ordained the Ministry, to be in his Hand the Instrument to make them *such*. So that the Ministry is *first*, and an Instrumental Cause to make them a People *as such*.

2. The Work of a Mayor is to *Govern* only. A Minister hath other Work, to feed with *Word and Sacraments*, which they may do, when called to it, where they cannot *Govern*, as I shew'd before.

3. The Catholick visible Church, made up of particular visible Churches, is called ἡ κοινωνία. *Ephes. 4. 4.* *1 Cor. 12. 12.* and we are all Members of that *one Body*, and the Members are bound to help one another, else 'tis contrary to the Light of Nature, *1 Cor. 12. 25.* But where do you read that all Corporations and Kingdoms make *one Body of Christ*.

4. I think Pastors and Teachers are *Ministers*; the Apostle call's himself and others so, *Ministers*, *1 Cor. 3. 5.* The Apostles were Catholick Pastors to the Catholick Church *, *Actu primo & secundo* depended upon the Call of no Church. * *2 Cor. 11. 28. The ministry* †, not the *Pastorship*. If then a Man be a Pastor of such a Church, both *Care of all Actu primo & secundo*, yet he is a *Minister*, and doth habitually *actu primo*, bear a *respect* to the Catholick Church, and may perform the *Acts* of a *Minister* to another Church that is in want, and cannot at present help themselves, and call † *1 Tim. 5. 12.* upon him to help; for as he is a *Minister*, that Church which Called him, was *2 Tim. 4. 5.* no Cause of that.

What difference is there between the *Acts* of a *Pastor* and a *Minister*? because *Col. 4. 17.* I read one saying, *He may Preach as a Minister, [which is better than a Gifted Brother] but not as a Pastor.*

This giving the *Keys* to the *Eternity*, as the *first Subject* of them, hath brought * *See Mr. in that Sin which Mr. Wilson* [that Eminent Servant of Christ, and my former Quick's *Pastor*] calls *Koraism*. * What Mr. Quick writes I am both an Eye and Ear-witness to: About fifty four Years since he Preached on *Mar. 2. 5.* in *Boston* in *New-England*, and did think the Pillie-man had Faith, because Christ tells him, *do's Fau-
lis Sins were forgiven*, but no Forgiveness without Faith; up rose one first, for-
ral, p. 22. sooth.

sooth he was not satisfied, then another after him, then Mr. Cotton our Teacher he took up our Pastor's Case, and defended it, and ten, one after another, fell upon him : Tho' the Text does not say, when Jesus saw *his*, but *their* Faith, it doth not follow but the Passe-man might be included in the word *their* ; and *his* Faith put them on, both the Bearers and Passe-man had Faith. This was too common in that Church, though the most publick, where Seamen and all Strangers came. Sir Henry Vane was the Man that did embolden them, when Ministers had done Preaching, he would find Questions to put to them, though they were Strangers.

Second Question.

A Reverend Author out of a Book composed [as he tells us] by several Bishops and great Doctors, and approved by Authority, in King *Henry* the Eighth's dayes, hath Collected these Propositions :

“ *First*, That a Parochial or Congregational-Church Government, is according to the Church of England, *jure Divino*,

“ *Secondly*, That the Diocesan or National Government is *jure Humano*.

“ *Thirdly*, That Protestants [except some obscure Writer] assert, *Particular Churches to be the *reges* Joy & Sorrow of Church-Government*.

“ Among whom, saith he, there are these differences :

“ 1. The Episcopal and Presbyterian differ from the Congregational about the Extent of particular Churches, i. e. the *Congregational* concludes there must be no more than are capable of Personal Communion : The former make a greater extent, and give too great advantage to *Papacy*.

“ 2. They differ concerning the Nature of Discipline ; the Congregational being esteemed an *Esposuer of a Democracy*, the Presbyterian of an *Aristocracy*, the Episcopal of *Monarchy*.

[But *Maccovius* ^a, *Kickerman* ^b, mention another, *Aristo Democratical*, and

Dr. Ames ^c seems to be of the same judgment] * *Thol. Polem.* p. 161.

^b *Syß. Thol.* p. 3. * *Medul. Thol.* p. 1. c. 33. *thes.* 20.

“ *Fourthly*, All Protestants agree in asserting the *Independency* of particular Churches.

Thus far my Author.

That we may understand one another clearly : Suppose we then that all the Christians in *England*, that dwell in their several Parishes, were such as deserved the Name of *Visible Saints* ; these meet every Lords-Day in their Parish-Church [as they call it] to Worship God, where there is but one Pastor. [Lecturers and Readers are but in few Parishes in the Countrey, nor have they any Power in Church-Government.]

I. Are

1. Are these the particular Churches you mean, by the words *Parochial* and *Congregational*? I suppose my Brother means so.

2. Is every such particular Church the *πρῶτον κλῆσις* of the Power of the Keys?

3. Are all these *Independent*? my Brother hath said it.

First, I desire my Brother would Name one such Church, which the Apostles did Constitute but with one Teaching Elder or Pastor.

Secondly, How you may perswade the Pastor to admit the People to be *Rulers* with them, I cannot tell, but I doubt we shoud have a *Monarchical-Government* set up in every Parish in *England*, which you say the Bishops espouse.

Mr. *Norton*, an acute and Learned Divine as *New-England* had, being at a Meeting of about forty Elders, one that was newly come into the Countrey was reading to the Elders what his Judgment was about Church-Government: He would have it to be *Democratical*, quoting *Morellus* several times: What have we to do with *Morellus*, said Mr. *Norton* to me; if I cannot prove the Government of the Church to be *Presbyterian*, I will give up our Causē.

Thirdly, If all these particular Churches be *Independent*, I fear we should have wild doings, Experience have proved it already. If there be one or two Gentlemen, of *Parish*, *Pity* and *Parts*, that stick close to the Minister, and awe the ^{we see no} People, things may go on quietly; else if there be but two Self-conceited, prag-^{ful effects of} *matical* Fellows, as I have known, you should soon see what will become of it. *At this day*

Fourthly, Suppose the Pastor be foully scandalized by some of his Church, one or more, how shall the Government be carried on? shall he be Plaintiff and Judge in his own Case? I have known a Case where a Pastor had great Offence given, I propounded the Case to Dr. *Owen* *, whether that Pastor should pro-^{* And Mr.} ceed according to *Matt. 18. 15, 16*? he told me by no means, when he heard Faldo. my Reason. We shall meet with hard Cases, if we come to set to Government indeed.

Fifthly, Suppose the Pastor himself grow scandalous, how shall Government be carried on now?

Sixthly, Good Men and Ministers are subject to Passions and Infirmities, whence it is not fit the Government of the Church shoud be Committed to *One* alone.

Seventhly, *To Govern will* is a Gift by it self; a Man may be a good *Preacher*, but no good *Gouvernoor*.

Eighthly, When our Lord sent out the Apostles, and the Seventy, only to Preach, he sent them out by two and two, *Mar. 6. 7. Luk. 10. 1.* Now a single Pastor undertakes all.

Ninthly, The Jewish Synagogues had several Elders to carry on the Government in one of their Synagogues, and we but one, *Plus vident Oculi, quam Oculus.*

It is true, our Pastor with his People may truly be called a *Church*; as that Woman who had no Arms, but held her Pen between her Toes, and so wrote, [I have seen of her Writing] may well be said to be *Animal rationale*, a rational Creature; but had God made the Woman so at first, the Woman had not been a *meet help* to Man. So here is a Company of Visible Saints, one Pastor, here is Preaching, Prayer, Administration of Sacraments, and in some Cafes Exercise of Discipline, so that it is a true *Church*, but not such a *Church* as the Apostles sent by Christ did Constitute, sufficient to answer all ends of a *Church*;

'tis imperfect; defective, and our Duty is to write after that Copy the Apostles of Christ have set us.

2d. Part of the Church, Dr. *Owen* hath proved there ought to be many Elders in every Church, by Scriptures and Reasons, I think sufficiently.

P. 138. Soon after the Apostles in the Primitive Churches, Mr. *Clarkson* in his Discourse against Diocesan Churches [his first Book, p. 5. 21.] hath shown there were more Presbyters in every Church than were necessary.

In those Virgin Churches in the Valleys of *Piedmont*, which were never defiled with Popery, but kept pure from the Apostles dayes, [where I find Ordination was with Imposition of Hands, contrary to our Men] I read in their low Condition seven Elders made a *Classis*; they carried on their Government by joint Councils; they had their Consistories, and 140 Pastors heretofore in a Synod.

Whence, this *one* Teaching Elder, or a single Pastor in a Church, is a *Novel* thing, different from the Apostles, and the Practices of the best Churches.

The last time I was with Dr. *Owen*, discoursing with him about Church-Government, he was saying to me, I would fain know whether the Government of the House of God be likely to be most prevalent, being carried on by one single Pastor, or by many Elders met together, and Acting in the Name of the Lord? I think the Question may be easily Answered, and in Order to it, I state the Question:

Quest. Whether unto the right Constitution of a particular Gospel-Church, it be Necessary that all the Officers and Members of the Church do meet together in one place at one time, to Celebrate all the Institutions of Christ?

P. 55. The Learned Dr. *Owen* having changed his Opinion from what it was when he wrote his *Conventry Essay* for the practice of Church-Government; when he would have the extream of the Division not above eight or ten Miles, so the Center not more than four or five Miles from any part of it, &c. He now tells us, *To manifest that Assemblies of the whole Church, at once and in one place, for the celebration of Divine Worship, is the Essence of a Church, without which it hath no real Being, — the Lord appointed the Males which were the Circumcised Church, should appear in one place three times a Year, Exod. 23. 14. Deut. 16. 16.*

I did not think that *Place* being but a Subject, and *Time* an Adjunct, should be *Essential* to a Church; yea, so as no *real Being* without them.

Neither am I satisfied with this Proof: For their Meetings three times a Year, were to perform three particular Services, proper to the Jews, and that but *once* a Year, and *that day* the Law appointed, and no other, we have no such Appointments under the Gospel: The Lord's Supper which answers the Pasover, was Celebrated every Lords-Day in the Primitive Churches.

2ly. Only the *Males* appeared then: We think Women and Children as well as their Children, are Members of the Church, and ought to appear with the *Males*, to Worship God every Lords-Day.

3ly. When

3ly. When they were in *Jerusalem*, the *Metropolis* of the Kingdom, how did their eating the *Passover* in a thousand, it may be two thousand several Houses, answer our Partaking of the *Lords Supper* at one Table in one particular Church? we should have so many Churches: The other Feasts were proper to them.

Nor could they meet in the Court all at one time to Worship God, there being in *David's* time, one Million, five hundred and seventy thousand men [besides the Tribes of *Benjamin* and *Levi*] that drew Sword. 1 Chron. 21. 5, 6.

The Dr. tells us, *The Members of such a Church may and ought to meet occasionally in distinct Assemblies, especially in times of Persecution, for Prayer, Preaching of the Word, mutual Exhortation, &c.* And in another place, *The constant meeting in one place is not best for Edification.* 1st. Book. p. 27. & 353.

Since he mentions *Preaching of the Word*, I suppose he means their Officers are with them to *Preach* to them, and why not then as well to *Administer* the *Lords Supper* as to *Preach*? one Scripture against it I would gladly see. To *Baptize*, they do not question. There were three *Teaching Elders* in Dr. *Owen's* Church, [the only Church that I know of in *England*, that came up to the *Apostolical Pattern*] these three might meet together with their Members in times of *Persecution*, especially in three distinct Assemblies, consequently *Places*, to *Pray*, to *Preach*, to *Baptize*, and to *Administer* the *Lords Supper*, for any thing I know out of God's *Word*: Then may not we meet in distinct Assemblies to such *Ends*, and yet be but one particular Church, as his was; but for other *Ends* we may meet in one place.

So in the *Country* Villages we may have many Elders in one particular Church, as he saith there ought to be, else I know not how we shall do for Churches in the *Country*.

But to come to the Question: If the whole Church meeting together in one place, and at one time, be essential to a Church, and it hath no *real Being* without it, then it must be proved: 1. Either from *Divine Precept*. Or, 2. From the Examples of the Churches planted by the *Apostles*. Or, 3. From forcing Reasons drawn from the *Ends of Worship*.

For the first, I see none named, but *Example* is the *Proof*, and the words *ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ*, mentioned in the *Acts* and *Corinthians*, are the Corner-stone of this Building; five times pious and learned *Ames* quotes these words: * Dr. *Lightsfoot* * Vol. 2. P. 755.

I grant, where there are many Elders and much People dwelling so that they can meet conveniently in one place, to carry on all Church-work, as was the Case of all the Churches we read of in the *Gospel*, being in *Cities*, there is a particular *Church* without any question. So I yield to *ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ*.

But I wish these Men who are so rigid for *one place*, had but the experience in themselves which I have observ'd in others. Precious Christians, who had no Coaches nor Horses to carry them, but crasie Bodies, yet longing for the *Ordinances*, which they might have had, if my Notion might prevail, within two Stones cast, but for this Notion of the *One Place* they must Travel two Miles; they do so, but when they come home at Night, they are so spent and tired that to Bed they must goe, the next day came Complaining to me, they had lost the Benefit of the *Ordinances*, they could mind nothing but their Pain. Many Christians having infirm Bodies must not enjoy the *Ordinances* at all, when they might have them the next door: Hath God no respect to the Bodies of his People?

As to the Examples he brings, the Question is, Whether there were no more Christians in these Cities than could meet in one place? if not, then 'tis no more than I have yielded before; for these had many Elders in them to carry on all Church-work, which the Dr. faith ought to be, and is the thing I stand upon, from the Apostolical Constitution of Churches.

But if his Argument from *Examplis* be so Cogent, then he must bring us Examples out of these Cities, where there were more Christians than could meet in one place, at one time, and so were forced to meet in more places, and these made more distinct Churches. If these Examples can be brought, then I yield the Question from *Examplis*.

But if no such Examples can be brought, [as I am sure there is not one in all the Gospel] then the Argument from *Examplis* falls, and is of no force.

Obj. If they did meet in distinct places, they were, and must be distinct Churches?

Answ. But his Proof is all from *Example*, and that implies there were such Churches *de facto*, else there could be no *Example*.

2. I deny the Consequence; for tho' a Number of Christians did swarm out of the first Church, yet they might have but one *Teaching Elder*, and so could not carry on all Church-work; and there ought to be many Elders in one Church, saith the Dr. be they six or seven Congregations, it comes to the same. I have heard that in Lancashire there is one great Parish Church, and several Chappells belong unto it, in which Ministers Preach and Administer the Lords Supper, which do shadow out what I aim at.

As to the Examples which are brought, *Mede* and *Fuller*, Men of great Learning, tell us, that in the first Century, Christians had a room Dedicated and Appropriated to the Worship of God, [what their Design is I leave] yet they tell us it was but a room in some private Disciples House: Nor in the second Century had they publick Places to meet in, say our *Homilies against Idolatry*, lib. 2. p. 66.

The Lord tells *Paul*, *Acts 18. 10.* *I have much People in Corinth*: How much? so much as may meet in one place in a private Disciple's House, when their Tables for their Love-Feasts, &c. are set: This is much honour to the Text.

Several of the Fathers understand the word *Church*, in *1 Corinth. 11. 18.* to be meant the place where the *Church* met; *Continens pro Contimento*, and I think it may be so well understood, *aveg,quevay vuvw*, these were the Church of the believing *Corinthians*, that met together *iv m' exxanolia*, in the Church. The Church here is opposed to their own *Houses*, v. 22. then I know nothing against it but *exxanolia*, in the *14 chap. 34.* may be so understood, *Let your Women keep silence in the Churches*; not in the *Church*, as in the *18th. V.* but *Churches*; so that they met in more places than one, in *Corinth*, yet but one *Church*, *2 Cor. 2. 1.*

Our last Annnotator Translate the words *ἐπὶ τῷ ἀντρῷ*, in the *20th. V.* for the same thing, not the same place, and I think his Reason is good; and I have wondered that Learned Men should render the words so in *Acts 2. 44.* Dr. *Lightfoot* saith the words cannot be so rendered, and gives other significations of the words, that they will not prove the Question.

As for the *Church* in *Ephesus*, which is another Example brought, *Paul continued there three Years*, *Acts 20. 31.* The reason of his stay, a great and effectual door is opened, *1 Cor. 16. 8, 9.* *The Word of God grew mighty*, *Acts 19. 20.* It grew so, that they dare venture to burn the Books that were of Value among the *Ephesians*, before the face of the People, valued at eight hundred Pounds the least,

least, *Act 19. 19.* Both Jews and Gentiles came in, *Act 19. 10, 17.* And how many Christians have we now in *Ephesus*? so many as may meet in one room in a private Disciples House. *Paul's great door*, and his word *mighty*, had better been spared, for this is but a disgrace to the Text.

As for what *Justin Martyr* writes, that the Christians in the *Towns and Villages* met on the *Sunday*. 1. How many were there in the Villages? 2. Had they any *Pastor* in the Villages? 3. How far were these Villages from the Towns? *Justin Martyr* saith nothing to these Heads.

Come lower to the Year 252. when the Quarrel was between *Cornelius* and *Novatianus*. *Cornelius* in his Epistle to *Fabius* saith of *Novatianus*, *He was Ignorant* there ought to be but one *Bishop* in that *Church* [of *Rome*] in which were forty six *Presbyters*, seven *Deacons*, &c.

A little Digression. *One Bishop* in *Rome*. Was not *Rome* a Metropolis, where the Seat of the Emperor was? but then it should have been *Arch-Bishop*; but *Cornelius* saith one *Bishop* in that *Church* [of *Rome*.] And to this day we call the Pope, the *Bishop* of *Rome*, not *Arch-Bishop* of *Rome*. Simple *Bishop* can content *Cyprian*, *Bishop* of *Carthage*, and *Cornelius Bishop* of *Rome*, which two Cities caused bloody Battles, which of them should be the *Emperors* of the World. How they then can be esteem'd Men of Truth, we may easily judge, that dare Preach and Print, the seven Angels of the seven Churches in *Asia* were seven *Arch-Bishops*, when one hundred and sixty Years after those Churches, there was no *Arch-Bishop* in those great Cities.

But to go on — concerning the Church of *Jerusalem*, I Consent to what he saith, and let it stand for our Rule to Act by; of it Dr. *Owen* thus writes, *This Church of Jerusalem, thus called and collected out of the Church of the Jews, was the Rule and Pattern of the Disposing of all the Disciples of Christ into Church Societies, in Obedience to his Command throughout the World*, *Catechis.* p. 85. let this stand.

How many thousands of Disciples did belong to this Church of *Jerusalem*, we cannot tell; but this we find, *Act 4. 4.* there were five thousand at that time; and *Act 5. 14.* *Multitudes* of *Men* and *Women* now were added to those five thousand: In the 6 *Act. 7.* we read the *Number* of the Disciples multiplied in *Jerusalem* greatly: I suppose no Man will say these were such as we read of a *Act. 5. 9.* *Strangers*; if they were, yet it hurts not me, they were all of this Church; and we know Members of Independent Churches in *London* lived forty Miles distant from them: Here was Prayer, Preaching, Administration of both Sacraments, Election and Ordination of Officers; Terrible Discipline, if I might so call it, upon *Ananias* and *Saphira*. But was all this in *one place*? No sure; when there were but the three thousand added, they *Brake Bread*, *καὶ ἔστοv*: *Bera* *Act. 2. 46.* and *Grotius* speak fully to my purpose as to the distinct places; and that by *Breaking of Bread* the *Lords Supper* is intended, as in the *42 v.* the *Salmur Divines*. *A Lapide*, *Dr. Hammond*, *Dr. Owen*, *Mr. Baxter*, and others whom I mention not, do all agree. Nor do I think there is any Man will say they did all partake of the *Lords Supper* in one House, at one time; much less then afterwards. Thus was their *Preaching*, *Act. 5. 42.* *καὶ ἔστοv*.

It is certain then they met in several distinct places, both to Preach and Administer the Sacrament, yet but one Church. How long it was between the day of *Pentecost* and *Stephen's Death*, I know not; but so long thus was their Practice, and had been longer, if that *Persecution* had not befallen them.

If then the meeting in *one place* had been so essential to a Church as the Dr. makes

makes it, we should have seen it here. Surely the Apostles, with whom our Lord had been speaking concerning the things pertaining to his Kingdom, 1. Act. 3. so lately, would not do any thing contra-essential to a Church. Yea, here was matter ready prepared for several particular Churches, meeting in several distinct places, for Divine Worship, had the Lord pleased to have declared that it was his Will, that meeting in every such distinct place, should make a particular Church, and so have given a Pattern, how all particular Churches should be Constituted: Here wanted nothing, I say, but the Declaration of his Will.

We have heard in the time of our Persecution, that several thousands of the Scots met in one Field, to Administer and partake of the Lords Supper. Tho' it was not a House, it was a Place, yet we do not read that ever the Apostles did so much as once call all the Church together into one place, to Administer the Lords Supper, that they might leave one Example at least, that in every Church there must be but One Table, or one Altar as some call it; which they might easily have done, had one place in their Judgment [men guided by the Spirit] been so essential to a Church as some make it now.

Many thousands of particular Churches make up One Body of Christ: Why then so many particular Congregations [where the Members of one Congregation are known to the others] as there may be Elders sufficient to carry on all Church-work, may not make one particular Church, I know not. It is certain, that where only one Pastor, with a Parochial Congregation make a Church, all the Ends of Churches cannot be attained; not only Reason, but Experience also hath sufficiently proved it.

Where a Congregation is so far remote from others, and so poor that it cannot maintain one Pastor well, such a People must do as well as they can; but where Congregations are nearer, tho' they be poor, [as I know few that are not] yet they may Coalesce into one Church, to attain all Church-Ends, so far as our Performance of Duties to those Ends may conduce.

Suppose there were seven Teaching Elders in a particular Church, there is but One of these that Pray, Preach, Administer the Sacraments, Order the Singing, at one time, all the rest put forth no Official Act, but are Attendants, as the Private Brethren. But if these seven were in seven Congregations, every one is at work, performing these Acts. As for other Official Acts, as Exercise of Discipline, Ordination, Election of Officers, &c. they may all meet together, and Act jointly; and thus it was in our Mother Church in Jerusalem, which is more to me than all that is said for One Place, One Altar, One Bishop. I cannot call to mind any Church-End, but may be attained as well this way, as if they met in one place always, and better.

